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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/669,737	09/24/2003	H. Glen Hathcock	6892.37003	6437
21000	7590	07/06/2004	EXAMINER	
DECKER, JONES, MCMACKIN, MCCLANE, HALL & BATES, P.C. BURNETT PLAZA 2000 801 CHERRY STREET, UNIT #46 FORT WORTH, TX 76102-6836			SHAW, ELIZABETH ANNE	
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
		3644		

DATE MAILED: 07/06/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/669,737	HATHCOCK, H. GLEN <i>PL</i>
Examiner	Art Unit	
Elizabeth A. Shaw	3644	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b). *j*

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 September 2003.

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) 8 and 9 is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) 6 and 7 is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 9/24/03.

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ .

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: ____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Meyers (805,925) in view of Newman (PTO-1449-E 5,271,211). Meyers shows a horse blanket 1 comprising a back portion having a neck end 2, with a neck opening, and a tail end, side portions which depend from the back portion when the blanket is on the horse extending from tail end to chest area 4 and being removably coupled together at the chest area 4 by at least one strap and fastener 6. Meyers does not disclose the use of an elasticized opening not hook and loop fasteners. Newman shows a horse covering 22 having a neck end with a neck opening, the opening being elasticized 38 for substantially the entire circumference, see column 4, lines 5-9. It is considered that the stretch-to-relaxation ratio is at least 10:9. Newman also shows the use of hook and loop fasteners 56, 60. With respect to claim 1, to use the elasticized neck of Newman with the blanket of Meyers would have been obvious to one skilled in the art in order to snug the blanket comfortably around the horse's neck for better protection. With respect to claim 3, to use the hook and loop fasteners of Newman with the blanket of Meyer would have been obvious to one skilled in the art as a replacement of functional equivalents. With respect to claim 5, to use the elasticized material of Newman with

the straps of Meyers would have been obvious to one skilled in the art in order to allow subtle adjustments to be made in the fit of the blanket around the horse for maximum comfort to the animal.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 6 and 7 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 8 and 9 are allowed.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Included for further reference on horse blankets are: Schneider et al (5,161,352), Gatto (6,318,054), Schneider (6,408,604) and MacGuinness (Des. 423,737).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Elizabeth A. Shaw whose telephone number is 703-308-1853. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 9:00-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael J. Carone can be reached on 703-306-4198. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Elizabeth Shaw
Elizabeth A. Shaw
Examiner
Art Unit 3644

June 24, 2004

MICHAEL J. CARONE
MICHAEL J. CARONE
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER